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Prince Edward Island Magazine

Vol. I

OCTOBER, 1899

No. 8

A Period of Growth and Transition.

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THE middle of the century, now nearing its end, marked a general departure in the political, social, agricultural, and commercial affairs of Prince Edward Island. The period of settlement may be said to have been over at 1850, and a period of growth followed. The concession of Responsible Government awakened new impulses in the minds of the older people. The Free Education Act unlocked the door of knowledge to the young. The application of steam to purposes of locomotion by sea and land, gave an immense impetus to commerce the world over; and, remote as Prince Edward Island was from the great centres of trade, its people felt on every side the influence of the spirit of commercial enterprise, which had seized the minds of men. The adoption of Reciprocal Trade with the United States, followed by the Crimean War; the Civil War in America, and the construction of the Prince Edward Island Railway, were important factors in stimulating the industrial life of the Province. Prince Edward Island in these days seemed like a little giant refreshed with new wine. While, however, the expanding markets and prevailing commercial activity had stimulated production and given the farmer more ready and ample returns in cash than in the past; there came, as the inevitable accompaniments of increased resources, a multitude of new wants, and desires for more ambitious surroundings. The enlarged operations of the farm made machinery indispensable. The growing scarcity of fuel abolished the chimney and hastened the introduction of